

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A gaming system including a system controller, a credit establishment facility, a plurality of gaming machines, a communications system connecting each of the plurality of gaming machines to the system controller, and a player identification device for association with player credit,

each of the gaming machines having

(1) a credit recording facility,

(2) a player input device,

(3) a player identification input device responsive to a player identification device; and

(4) a game controller to play a game when a player has established a credit in the credit recording facility of the respective gaming machine,

wherein the credit establishment facility includes a terminal connected to the communications system for transfer of player credits via the communication system to is arranged for the selection of a selected gaming machine to selected for play of a game, said terminal located remotely from the selected gaming machine and arranged to establish a player credit and to establish a player credit and to associate that credit with a player identification device of the player establishing the credit, and wherein said player credit is transferred to the gaming machine selected for play ~~by providing said player identification device to the player identification input device of the gaming machine selected for play, and said player credit being held in said credit recording facility of the gaming machine selected for play, and wherein the~~

gaming machine selected for play is locked so that the gaming machine no longer operates to play a game by any player, ~~via player action~~ solely when player credit held in the credit recording facility of the respective gaming machine selected for play is non-zero, and via player action unlocked so that the gaming machine selected for play operates to play a game when the gaming machine selected for play is supplied via the identification input device with the player identification device associated with the player credit held in the credit recording facility of the respective gaming machine.

2. (Currently Amended) The system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the selected gaming machine ~~machines~~ connected to the system includes a reservation button, and wherein ~~said player action includes~~ actuation of said reservation button locks said selected gaming machine from play.

3. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 44, wherein said actuation of said reservation button occurs while the player tracking device is received by said player identification input device.

4. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 1 wherein a gaming machine connected to the system includes a timeout device, and wherein when the machine is locked for more than a predetermined time any credit held in the credit recording facility of the machine is transferred to the system controller and held there for the player and the machine is unlocked to allow another player to establish a credit in the credit recording facility of the machine and to commence play.

5. (Cancelled).

6. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 1 wherein the player credit established by the credit establishment facility and associated with a player identification device of a player establishing the credit is held in the system controller.

7. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 6, wherein each gaming machine connected to the system includes a credit importing facility such that when a player identification device is supplied to a gaming machine that is not currently holding a player credit in its credit recording facility and is unlocked, the gaming machine will signal the system controller to transfer the players credit of the player supplying the player identification device to the credit recording facility of the respective gaming machine.

8. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 7, wherein the player credit held in the system controller is transferred to the credit recording facility of the machine selected by the player when the player inserts the associated player identification device into the player identification input device of the selected machine.

9. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the player identification device is a token.

10. (Original) The system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the token is a magnetic stripe card.

11. (Original) The system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the token is a smart card.

12. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the token is issued by a gaming establishment as an in-house identification mechanism.

13. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the token is a financial transaction card issued by a remote financial institution.

14. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the token is a ticket readable by an acceptor mounted within the gaming machine.

15. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in any one of claims 1, wherein player identification input device is a bio-sensor input device and the player identification device is a physical attribute of the player.

16. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 15, wherein the player identification input device is a fingerprint reader and the player identification device is a fingerprint of the player.

17. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 15, wherein the player identification input device is an iris scanner and the player identification device is an eye of the player.

18. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine for connection to a gaming system wherein the gaming system comprises a system controller, a plurality of gaming machines, and a communications system connecting each of the plurality of gaming machines to the system controller, the gaming machine comprising

(1) a credit recording facility,

(2) a player input device,

(3) a tracking input device responsive to a player tracking device, and

(4) a game controller arranged to play a game when a player has established a credit in the credit recording facility of the gaming machine,

wherein one gaming machine of the plurality of gaming machines is locked so that the one gaming machine no longer operates to play a game by any player, ~~via player action~~

solely at a time when player credit held in the credit recording facility of the one gaming machine is non-zero, and automatically unlocked to allow play when a player tracking device is afterward supplied to the tracking input device of another gaming machine, and credit associated with the credit held in the credit recording facility of the one gaming machine is automatically transferred to the credit recording facility of the other gaming machine in response to the player tracking device being supplied to the tracking input device of the other gaming machine.

19. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine as claimed in claim 18, which includes a reservation button; and wherein said player action includes actuation of said reservation button.

20. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine as claimed in claim 19, wherein the reservation button is actuated while said player tracking device is received by said tracking input device.

21. (Cancelled).

22. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine as claimed in claim 18 wherein a player credit is established by a credit establishment facility and associated with a player tracking device of a player establishing the credit, said player credit to be held in the system controller.

23. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine as claimed in claim 22, includes a credit importing facility such that when a player tracking device is supplied to a gaming machine that is not currently holding a player credit in its credit recording facility and is unlocked, the gaming machine will signal the system controller to transfer the player's credit of the player supplying the player tracking device to the credit recording facility of the respective gaming machine.

24. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine as claimed in claim 23, wherein the player credit held in the system controller is transferred to the credit recording facility of the machine selected by the player when the player inserts the associated player tracking device into the tracking input device of the selected machine.

25. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine as claimed in claim 18 wherein the player tracking device is a token.

26. (Original) The gaming machine as claimed in claim 25, wherein the token is a magnetic stripe card.

27. (Original) The gaming machine as claimed in claim 25, wherein the token is a smart card.

28. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine as claimed in claim 25, wherein token is issued by a gaming establishment as an in-house identification mechanism.

29. (Original) The gaming machine as claimed in claim 25, wherein token is a financial transaction card issued by a remote financial institution.

30. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine as claimed in claim 25, wherein the token is a ticket readable by an acceptor mounted within the gaming machine.

31. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine as claimed in claim 18 wherein tracking input device is a bio-sensor input device and the player tracking input device is a physical attribute of the player.

32. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine as claimed in claim 31, wherein the tracking input device is a fingerprint reader and the player tracking device is a fingerprint of the player.

33. (Previously Presented) The gaming machine as claimed in claim 31, wherein the tracking input device is an iris scanner and the player tracking device is an eye of the player.

Claims 34 – 43 (Cancelled).

44. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said player action further includes use of said player identification device.

45. (Previously Presented) The system as claimed in claim 2 wherein said player action includes removal of said player identification card from said player identification device.

46. (Currently Amended) The gaming system of claim 1 wherein the selected gaming machine is locked to prevent play when credits are transferred by said terminal ~~credit establishment facility~~ prior to the selected gaming machine being supplied with the player identification device.

47. (Previously Presented) The gaming system of claim 1 wherein the gaming system detects whether the selected gaming machine is in use prior to the transfer of the player credit to the selected gaming machine.

48. (Previously Presented) The gaming system of claim 1 wherein the gaming system does not allow the transfer of player credits to proceed if the selected gaming machine is in use.

49. (New) The gaming system of claim 1 wherein said terminal is a cashier's terminal operable by a cashier.

50. (New) The gaming system of claim 1 wherein said terminal is cash in/cash out terminal operable by the player.